

The McGill Daily

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anti-poverty issue



It's all connected: my poverty is your wealth is my wealth is your poverty

Poverty tends to be treated as a third world phenomenon or as a small number of "charity cases" amongst the North American population. These images place poverty "out there" rather than where it really exists — at the basis of our society, supporting the wealth above.

Poverty is more subtle than the extreme examples usually considered. Poverty is daily life for many of us, and it shows itself in the food, housing and kinds of family life people can afford. Though there are differences between rural or urban situations and industrial or communal milieus, all forms of poverty suffer invisibility.

The economic boom of the 1960s created the myth of a single middle-class society.

This myth persisted through the so-called 'recessions' of the 1970s and has only started to abate as the reality of permanent marginalization becomes more visible. Homelessness has joined the shopping list of issues for the socially-concerned, but it has not yet been deeply understood as a symptom of an ever-present disease — the class system.

Thanks to the perceived needs of world markets, the welfare state, the class system's shroud, is now being dismantled. The potential consequences in terms of social impoverishment and violence are staggering.

Bureaucrats wage wars on crime — theft, drug dealing, prostitution — in the name of

morality while their social policies make thieves, addicts and hookers out of us. Crises in our prisons have begun to follow, because poverty (and racism, sexism, etc.) has crowded us into the cells. But incarceration is just a stopgap measure.

Aside from their desire to protect their own power, it's difficult to find reasons why governments decide creating poverty is an acceptable way to deal with our dilemmas. Their disconnection from any real morality is baffling. Their urbanized, anti-community mentality is infuriating. What's even harder to understand is why we tolerate it — or why those who do not are not given more aid by their neighbours.

Recent struggles over tuition hikes, UI cuts, VIA cutbacks, housing laws and welfare discrimination are all one. University students have no right to take a disinterested attitude towards this struggle, whatever their parentage. Right now many students don't recognize that poor people are in the classrooms, too, and in the neighbourhoods surrounding the university. But in the long run, we'll each have to declare our loyalties.

Which side are you on?

Carl Wilson
Susana Bejar
Heather MacKay
Issue Coordinators

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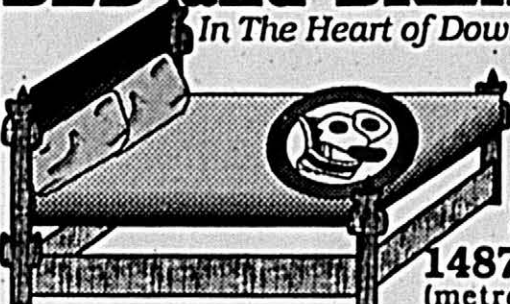
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Clash with police sends students to hospital

by Jennifer Cressey

Montréal riot police hospitalized three student protestors yesterday, after a confrontation with strikers at CEGEP Vieux Montréal.

Two were released shortly after admission to the emergency ward of Saint Luc Hospital. The third remains in critical condition, having endured repeated blows to the head. Other students were left unconscious on the sidewalk as arrests were made.

The violence began yesterday morning when the riot squad greeted striking CEGEP students outside their school. The Vieux Montréal administration had obtained a court injunction against picketers the night before.

About 100 students gathered at CEGEP de Vieux Montréal at 8h to protest tuition fee increases. By 10h30 the group had tripled in size, and the riot squad made its first appearance, forcing the crowd to disperse. The students re-assembled at UQAM, and returned to the CEGEP at noon. Half an hour later, the riot squad returned.

"We were surrounded, they just started pounding on us. There was no request to vacate the area, and our rights were not read to us," said one CEGEP Maisonneuve student who was arrested.

The riot squad was responding to the court injunction — a request for the immediate removal of student protestors from the downtown campus.

Students occupied the street in front of the CEGEP when they heard of the injunction, but their actions did nothing to stop the squad.

The students' strike followed a general assembly vote Monday afternoon. In all, 26 students were arrested yesterday and six students were arrested Tuesday. Only three of the six have been released from prison.

Over 250 Montréal CEGEP and university students gathered outside police Station 33 on Ontario street late yesterday afternoon to protest the arrests.

There will be a protest march tomorrow afternoon beginning at 15h in Parc Lafontaine.



Senate acknowledges fee hikes are no solution to underfunding crisis

by Mitu Sengupta

The thawing of the fee freeze won't solve Québec universities' financial problems, the McGill Senate formally acknowledged yesterday.

Senate unanimously accepted Students' Society President-elect Kate Morriset's proposal that McGill urge the Québec government to "examine" alternative methods of funding university education. According to Morriset, Québec has not explored schemes such as a Post University Tax and a direct tax on corporations which could effectively pump millions of dollars into its financially drained universities.

These schemes aren't untested: while the Post University Tax is in operation in Australia, France levies a direct tax of 1.7 percent on corporation employees' salaries. Monies collected through such taxes are used to finance university research and development.

According to members of Fédération étudiante et étudiantes du Québec (FEEQ), Québec corporations contribute the least to university funding in North America. Canadian corporations' funding of research and development falls far behind the norm in other industrial states.

"Québec private enterprise benefits from an educated populace yet contributes minimally to the direct

financing of the university network," Morriset said.

McGill's student fees have been raised 147 percent over the next two years. Students protesting the hike say it will do little to solve Québec universities' financial problems. Education budget cuts are the key source of university underfunding. The effects of a tuition increase in Canada is often undermined by a simultaneous slashing of education budgets at the provincial and federal levels. Between 1977 and 1987, Ontario students' fees were raised 5.6 percent (in constant dollars). Government contributions to university funding fell 16 percent.

Morriset says the government should be willing to tap into new sources of funds to "ensure the final resolution of the recognized underfunding of Québec universities." Endorsing new tax plans is one way to approach the problem.

Students' Society President Santo Manna says Morriset's proposal shows "we're not just opposing tuition fee hikes, we're suggesting ways to solve the underfunding crisis."

But how effective is this proposal? "We're not necessarily endorsing this motion, we're just saying they should be examined," Morriset told the Senate. It has not formed a committee or group to

look into the matter, and no person has, as yet, been named responsible for undertaking any such "examination".

Coalition Against the Privatization of Education member Brian Schnarch said, "Senate's initiative is admirable but we'd like to see concrete action as soon as possible. I hope this doesn't get lost in the university's bureaucratic jungle."



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contributors
Mitu Sengupta
Zeb Brown
Salimah Valiani
Momin Khan
Mike Ryan
Wayne Hiltz

Editorial Offices
3480 McTavish, room B-03
Montréal, Québec H3A 1X9
telephone (514) 398-6784

co-ordinating editor
Susana Bejar
co-ordinating news editor
Linda Gyulai
news editors
Carl P. Wilson III
Joyce Lombardi
layout and design co-ordinators
Heather MacKay
Eric Léonard
CUP editor
Dave McCullough

daily française
Philippe Archambault
Alan Bowman
photo editor
Dennis Sagwitz
Gilles Pesant
features editor
Alex Roslin
supplement editor
Jennifer Cressey
science editor
Alice Wei

Business and
Advertising Office
3480 McTavish, room B-17
Montréal, Québec H3A 1X9

business managers
Brigitte Elie
Marian Schrier
telephone (514) 398-6790

advertising managers
Caroline Elie
Boris Shedov
telephone (514) 398-6791

advertising layout and design
Mike Sportza
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Montréal anti-poverty groups: fighting conservative policy

by Wayne Hiltz

Conservative times, conservative governments and repressive anti-social laws have sparked a resurgence of anti-poverty and welfare rights groups in Montréal.

Several new groups have been created and established ones have taken on new vigour in their ceaseless fight against poverty, unemployment, and discrimination.

Although these groups have a common aim, they differ in their methods, problems, approaches, and constituencies.

The *Front Commun des assistés sociaux* groups over 60 welfare rights and community organizations across the province. Despite its failure to defeat the Quebec government's welfare reform act, Bill 37, the *Front Commun* continues to fight for the rights of welfare recipients on a provincial level.

Introduced in 1987 and finally passed last autumn, Bill 37 provided the impetus for the renewed strength of anti-poverty and welfare rights groups. The law cuts welfare benefits to force recipients back into the work force. Opponents say it ignores the sources of poverty and further impoverishes and humiliates recipients.

SCRAP—Paradis (a coalition formed to oppose the law sponsored by the former Manpower Minister) was formed in July 1987 to organize popular opposition to the government's project. When their efforts fell short in defeating the bill, it decided to transform itself in December 1988 into a permanent organization called L'Union.

L'Union's main aim was to retain the momentum built up over two years to unite the unemployed and non-unionized workers along with welfare recipients against what they see as government efforts to decrease salaries and social programs and to diminish working and living conditions.

"We really want to fight against the government. We don't want to have some kind of deal with them," said René Charest, a coordinator.

In the tradition of SCRAP—Paradis, L'Union takes concrete actions such as demonstrations and occupations. Charest said his group is still in the process of building up the organization in the city and province.

L'Union is organizing poor people in several Montreal districts, with significant progress being made in Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, Laval, and the north-central area known as la Petite Patrie, Charest said.

Chapters of L'Union have also been set up in Hull, Sherbrooke, and Quebec City.

The NDG Anti-Poverty Group is perhaps the best-organized group in English-speaking Montreal. Founded in 1987 in the wake of the new welfare bill, it has a strong core of volunteers and several pro-

grams and activities.

Besides advocacy for welfare recipients and the unemployed, the NDG Group also tackles housing and tenants' rights issues. It also participates in various political forums such as the recent Montreal roundtables into housing and economic development. Among its several services is the teaching of literacy using computers.

The *Organization d'aide aux assistés sociaux—sociales* (ODAS) is an established welfare rights group. While ODAS has existed under its current name for the last five years, it has been around since 1972.

ODAS works mostly in the southeast of Montreal and cooperates with other groups in Ville St Laurent and Plateau Mt Royal.

Although it is less politically-combative than L'Union and acts more as an advocacy and referral group, it is no less firm in its defense of the rights of welfare recipients and the poor in general.

Lionel Anselmo, a paid organizer with ODAS, condemned politicians and the public alike for turning a blind eye to the situation of poverty in Quebec. Poor people

urgently want to fully participate in society and to be given the same dignity and respect as everyone else, he explained.

Both the Verdun Anti-Poverty Group and the Welfare Rights Committee of Pointe Saint-Charles do advocacy work in their respective areas. This includes helping welfare recipients with the legal complexities of the new welfare law as well as counselling help with welfare officers.

Stanley Earle, an organizer with the Verdun group, admits that his group is not as militant as some others.

"We're not into pressure campaigns. If we feel that the problem should be publicized, we'll mention it to the (local) welfare office first," Earle said.

Cote-des-Neiges is one of the few Montreal districts with a sizeable poor population without a central anti-poverty organization. John Kinloch, coordinator of the food service group Multi-Caf, said that there has been some recent talk of setting up such a group but that nothing firm yet was being organized.



Pay equity is the wrong goal

by Salimah Valiani and Momin Khan

The attention currently being paid to pay-equity as a solution to female poverty ignores the institutional roots of women's inferior position in society, and consequently is unlikely to succeed, according to Ruth Berman, in "The Feminization of the US Workforce" (*Monthly Review*, April 1989), and E.K. Hunt, in his recent book, *Property and Prophets: The Evolutions of Economic Institutions and Ideologies*. Both come to this conclusion after exploring the direction of the female struggle in North America.

The women's movement first emerged in the 1820's, concerning itself with the abolition of slavery, poverty, divorce laws and working conditions. After 1890, the movement became much more narrow, focusing itself on women's right to vote. When this was won, in 1920, many of the two million women involved felt their goals had been fully achieved, and the movement collapsed.

Women's rights were briefly recognized when their labour was needed in the war factories and war offices. Since then, women have continued to enter the labour force, despite propaganda encouraging them to return to the home.

By 1988, four of every ten workers were women, but the jobs they did were predominantly low-wage, labour-intensive, and temporary. This unfolding process is described

in economic theory by the Babbage Principle, where the most difficult step in production is paid at a relatively high rate of pay, while simpler operations are performed at a minimum cost using women and children.

As the number of jobs within the secondary labour market increases, so does the percentage of women in the labour force. "Whereas unskilled labour originally came from displaced industrial workers and farmers, and then immigrants; it is now supplied by the vast number of women entering the labour market," says Berman.

Both class and sex

Hunt points out that "the average full-time woman worker only makes 59% of what a full-time male-worker is paid." The issue here is not equal pay for equal work. It is the type of work the present economic system is increasingly producing: low-wage, labour-intensive and temporary; and that women are being forced to do this work in the desperate attempt to survive and become self-sufficient.

Clerical labour is another sector in which low-paying jobs have been created for and filled by women. "It is a product of monopoly capitalism and it represents the creation of a large proletariat in a new form," says Berman.

"The chief distinction is along the lines of sex. This sex barrier that assigns most office jobs to women has made it possible to lower clerical wage rates below

those in any category of manual labour."

Male participation in the labour force is consequently decreasing. "There is an actual market repulsion of male labour because sectors in which women predominate are increasing," says Berman. What may follow is a lower-paid, female-dominated workforce.

Women's organizations such as National Action Committee on the



Status of Women in Canada, and National Organization of Women in the US have fought for legislative reform in order to eliminate inequalities faced by women. This approach, focusing on pay-equity instead of structural inequality, ignores the fundamental economic realities described earlier, and the fact that economic forces supercede political forces. Specifically, private enterprise and industry will ignore laws promoting equal rights for women whenever they interfere with the profit motive.

As Hunt puts it, "Because sexism performs such a necessary function for capitalism, it will always be the prevailing ideology under capitalism regardless of how

many laws are passed against it."

New distinct classes of women, then, are forming within the labour force. "This is how sexism is related to class oppression," says Hunt, "and sexism will never be eliminated until all class oppression is eliminated."

Only solution is mobilization

Berman stresses that efforts must be made to mobilize women workers, especially those in the secondary labour market. This is difficult because these workers are isolated even from the rest of the working class, as they work on a temporary basis, often completing a considerable amount of work inside their own homes.

As women make up a larger proportion of the labour force, greater divisions are forming between women and men workers, weakening the labour force both economically and politically. "Working men, for their own interests will have to recognize and support women leaders and work together with women to build a new kind of labour movement," says Berman.

This is not to say that the struggle for women's rights should end after a fundamental political, socio-economic change takes place. Rather, the initial step is a system based on achieving social aims instead of profit. "As long as capitalism exists, sexism, racism, poverty, inequality, unemployment, economic crisis, and alienation will prevail," says Hunt.

By Mark Quinn

In an unlikely coalition of interests, both anti-poverty activists and members of Montreal's business community agree the government's proposed goods and service tax (GST) should be scrapped.

Although the business community and the anti-poverty movement take issue with the GST for different reasons, both have put forward arguments that the poor, including students, will be hit hard by the 7 per cent federal tax on almost all goods and services purchased by individuals and companies.

"Expenses will go up as the new tax is imposed on everything from books to clothing to haircuts," said Yvon Cyrene, a tax specialist with Raymond, Chabot, Martin, Paré Accounting firm.

Anti-poverty activists say the poorest students will be hit hardest because they will not be eligible to receive GST tax breaks. The proposed GST grants single people and parents earning between \$6175 dollars and \$24 800 dollars a tax credit of as much as \$140 dollars.

National Anti-Poverty Organization spokesperson Havi Echenberg describes this feature of the GST as downright "bizarre" in light of the fact that a large number of students and single parents earn less than \$6000 dollars annually.

Despite these criticisms, Federal Finance Minister Michael Wilson claims the GST, first proposed in 1987 and scheduled to come into effect January 1, 1991, is necessary.

"The new tax will reduce the deficit, strengthen Canada's economic competitiveness, and establish a fairer sales tax system by replacing the existing 13.5 percent manufactures sales tax," Wilson said in a recent speech at McGill.

Both Cyrene, and Bill Chandler, a master's student in economics studying the federal deficit at Queen's University, agree the current manufactures tax (MST), established in 1924, has to go.

"The MST penalizes Canadian exporters by reducing their competitiveness with for-

Anti-poverty activists agree that taxing income rather than consumption is the simplest, fairest way the government can raise taxes. "In terms of complexity, the GST is the worst piece of legislation I have seen in 20 years," said Cyrene.

eign importers who are not paying this tax," said Chandler. The current tax system is also hopelessly inefficient, she added: "it is so full of loop-holes that many manufactures are finding ways to get around it."

Wilson, speaking at McGill to a largely student audience, argued that young people stand to gain from the GST in the long run and should therefore support its implementation.

"You are the ones who will benefit if we get the deficit problem under control, but you will be the ones that will pay in the future if the burden continues to grow."

Although the new tax would not be applied to basic groceries, prescription drugs, medical appliances and services, residential rents, day care, and most educational costs, anti-poverty activists say the tax, applicable to thousands of previously untaxed items and services, from baby clothes to burial fees, will penalize all Canadians in low tax brackets.

"The new tax will further reduce the buying power of low income families and individuals," said Echenberg.

But Wilson said the new tax, which is applied equally to all consumers, will not be unfair to social welfare recipients and low income earners.

"We are offsetting the impact of the tax for those people who are in low income brackets, by the introduction of the GST credit."

Wilson predicts that in 1991, the GST will raise \$5.5 billion more in revenues than the existing tax. He claims about half of the extra money will be returned to low income families through a sales tax credit. This credit

(distinct from the single person credit), will pay \$275 dollars for two adults (or one child and one adult), and \$100 dollars per child in households with incomes of 24 800 or less. Wilson says the remaining new revenue will be used to reduce income tax rates, raise family allowance and pension payments, and cover the cost of collecting the new tax — and still increase annual net revenues by 1.8 billion dollars.

Although Echenberg agrees the new tax system will improve the economic situation of some impoverished people in the first year of its implementation, she questions Wilson's contention that the GST credit will actually leave low-income earners better off in the long run.

"Each year, the GST credit will be worth less than the year before because the credit is designed to increase 3-per-cent less than

inflation," she said. "So, as inflation rises the value of the credit decreases."

Furthermore, anti-poverty groups fear provinces will treat the federal tax credit as income and deduct it from social welfare payments.

"There is no guarantee the provinces will not reduce provincial welfare payments to low income earners who are eligible to receive the federal tax credits," Echenberg said.

The government says the new tax will cause the inflation rate to rise 2.9 per cent, an estimate strenuously disputed by critics of the tax.

"What planet is he (Wilson) on?" asked Echenberg. "The rate of inflation will be pushed up much higher by employees demanding that their wages be raised to meet the 7 per cent increase in the cost of living."

But Chandler says the cost of living will not increase under the GST.

"In order to remain competitive manufacturers, no longer paying the 13.5 per cent MST, will keep their prices low."

Although members of the business community say the GST will make large Canadian exporters more competitive and reduce tax evasion by doing away with the loophole riddled MST, they are concerned that the

There is no guarantee the provinces will not reduce provincial welfare payments to low income earners who are eligible to receive the federal tax credits.

massive 325 page GST proposal will create an administrative nightmare.

"In terms of complexity, this (the GST) is the worst piece of legislation I have seen in 20 years," said Cyrene.

Anti-poverty activists say there are numerous approaches to taxation available to the government, but both they and Cyrene agree that taxing income rather than consumption is more just and less complicated.

"Taxing income is the simplest, fairest way the government can raise taxes," said Echenberg.

Despite, or perhaps because of, polls published last fall showing 79 per cent of the population was opposed to the GST, Ottawa has spent more than \$110 million selling its agenda and Revenue Minister Otto Jelinek, quoted in *Maclean's Magazine*, said the government will spend considerably more in the next fiscal year before the tax actually takes effect.

The GST bill is currently before the finance committee, it must pass a third reading in the commons and be approved by the Liberal-dominated Senate before becoming law, but as it moves further along the legislative process, GST critics grow increasingly pessimistic about their chances of stopping the tax proposal from becoming law.

"The government has committed itself to this program," Cyrene said. "After spending so much time and money they can't turn around and admit they were wrong. If the government doesn't proceed with the tax they would probably have to resign."

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, quoted in the *Winipeg Free Press*, said his government is willing to pay the price for the unpopular tax proposal which some economists argue will cost 68 000 jobs in Canada.

"We will take it on the chin if we have to, not because it is popular but because it is right," said Mulroney, echoing his anti-populist vision which first appeared during a similar campaign to sell Free Trade.

Echenberg predicts the GST will deliver a knock-out punch to the current government when they next go to the polls for re-election.

"They will probably lose the next federal election because of the GST," she said.



Business and anti-poverty groups share chagrin at GST

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Tuition fees are about poverty

Does the issue of tuition fee increases boil down to simply paying your way? Taxing lower-income Canadians for a service enjoyed least by them appears grossly unfair; and higher fees would directly relieve their tax burden. Yet there is also something patently absurd in the claim that perpetuating this division of educated rich and uneducated poor amounts to 'social justice'. It is no coincidence that labour unions and popular groups are among the strongest opponents of fee hikes.

by Susana Bejar

Critics argue that the price increase will only serve to further exclude low-income students from studying, for financial reasons. They maintain that post-secondary education should be universally accessible, and by raising fees the Québec government is only exasperating an already severe injustice.

L'Association nationale des étudiantes et étudiants du Québec (ANÉÉQ) has received letters of support from over 80 labour syndicates and popular organizations, who have also signed official resolutions against tuition fee increases.

Mario Guerdin of le Confédération des Syndicats Nationaux (CSN) Comité de Jeunesse (youth committee) said the CSN has always supported free education.

"For the CSN education is an essential service. No distinction should ever be made between social layers when it is being decided who will study. No one should ever be prevented from studying because of tuition fees," he said. "I don't have to tell you that it's not the middle class, sons and daughters of doctors and lawyers, who will be forced out of school. It goes without saying that it is the poor who will be excluded."

Education Ministry Claude Ryan himself has admitted that fee hikes will force enrolment to drop by 20 000 students.

According to Guerdin, fee hikes are consistent with the Liberal government's general attitude of disengagement from responsibility for accessible social services. "For sure, it's a question of priorities," he said. "It is well understood that there isn't money. But we have to ask why? Where is all the money going to?"

Another organization that has pledged its support for the student movement is the Front d'action populaire en réaménagement urbain (FRAPRU), a popular tenants rights group. Spokesperson Pierre Gaudreau drew a parallel between the situation facing low-income students and tenants.

"The difference between low-income and high is that low-income students borrow lots of money. They pay a high price that cuts into basic needs — that means food and quality of life," Gaudreau said. "It can be easily compared with rent in Québec. Some people are homeless. Another 1.5 million are paying too much in rent. It

doesn't mean they are homeless, but it cuts into their basic needs."

Gaudreau said it is evident that fee hikes fit into an emerging global politic, linked to the provincial Liberal government's orientation of putting not only the economy but social services in the hands of the private sector — this includes housing, day-care, welfare and health.

Just this week, Québec's health minister announced that it was no longer feasible for the government to provide "free" health services, that Québécois had to seriously consider service charges in upcoming years.

And for months welfare groups have been fighting changes to federal unemployment insurance laws which effectively absolve the federal government of all commitment to the system.

"We support the student movement against any hike of the fees. Education and other social rights should be affordable. Education is already unaffordable for many students in low-income situations. We believe there is enough money in our society to give everybody a

quality education," said Gaudreau.

Jean-Pierre Paquet, former secretary-general of ANÉÉQ, said no official statistics exist about who gets too little schooling and why. "We just have information on the student population, not on the community outside of the university," he said. The conspicuous gap in research indicates the inadequacies in the province's study of accessibility.

ANÉÉQ does know that approximately 37 per cent of Québécois go to CEGEP, and 20 per cent to university. Only half of these get their diplomas.

"It's not just a matter of accessibility. It's a way for the government to change the orientation and composition of the university," said Paquet. "It's not just coincidence that the government announced fee hikes at the same time that it declared that Québec provides sufficient accessibility to education. Ryan says we've had progress, we don't need to increase enrolment like we did 20 years ago."

From 1975, university enrolment increased 53 per cent in Québec, compared to only 9 per cent in Ontario, where fees were not frozen.

"Education is a poverty issue. It's no different from any of the social debates on the quality of rights for any social activities. For sure, those most affected by the fee hikes will be those who are poor, who don't have money. It's always the same people for whom the situation gets worse," said Paquet.

"It's part of an overall tendency to make people pay for service — welfare is another example. While the problem is general funding, a

one per cent tax on corporations would give something like \$700 million a year. There are companies with profits amounting to billions of dollars who don't pay anything.

"The government wants to reduce impositions on companies. They pay less money every year. The neo-liberals priority is to support economic development by asking less money of companies," Paquet said.

It is difficult not to notice that the government is targeting the poor.

"Whatever their intention, it's the reality that the poor are being attacked. It's not easy to say that

this is the goal, but it is undeniably the end," Paquet said.

Liberal MNA Jacques Chagnon told students recently that he saw no problem with a double standard emerging in education, a system of private "Harvards" for the rich, and public education for those who could not pay.

"I do not believe education is a right, it is a privilege. It is necessary that some people will not be educated," he told students from McGill and UQAM who were occupying his offices to protest his stance on fee hikes.

Inevitably, those who are denied Chagnon's "privilege" are those who cannot pay.

ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING THE FIGHT AGAINST FEE HIKES:

UNIONS:

- FÉDÉRATION DES PROFESSEUR-E-S DES UNIVERSITÉS DU QUÉBEC
- FNEEQ-CSN
- FÉDÉRATION DES ENSEIGNANTES ET ENSEIGNANTS DE CEGEP (CEO)
- FÉDÉRATION DU COMMERCE — CSN
- RASSEMBLEMENT DES EMPLOYÉS TECHNICIENS-AMBULANCIENS DU QUÉBEC RETAQ (FAS-CSN)
- SYNDICAT DES PROFESSEUR-E-S DU CEGEP DE L'OUTAOUAIS
- SYNDICAT DES PROFESSEURS UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC À TROIS-RIVIÈRES
- SYNDICAT DES EMPLOYÉS DU CEGEP DE TROIS-RIVIÈRES
- SYNDICAT DES CHARGÉ-E-S DE COURS DE L'UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTRÉAL
- SYNDICAT DES PROFESSEURS ET PROFESSEURES DE L'UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC À MONTRÉAL
- SYNDICATS DES ENSEIGNANTS-ES CEGEP JOLIETTE-DE LANAUDIÈRE
- SYNDICAT DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT DE CHAMPLAIN
- FÉDÉRATION DE SYNDICATS DU SECTEUR ALUMINIUM INC.
- SYNDICAT DES CHARGÉS ET CHARGÉES DE COURS DE L'UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC À MONTRÉAL
- SYNDICAT DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT DE LA RÉGION DES MILLES ÎLES
- SYNDICAT DU PERSONNEL DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT DE QUÉBEC-MONTMORENCY
- SYNDICAT DES TRAVAILLEUSES ET TRAVAILLEURS DE SOLIDAV-CSN (CENTRE DE CRISE)
- SYNDICAT DES TRAVAILLEUSES ET DES TRAVAILLEURS DU CLSC CENTRE-VILLE
- SYNDICAT DU PERSONNEL DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT DES HAUTES-RIVIÈRES (SPEHR)
- SYNDICAT DES TRAVAILLEUSES ET TRAVAILLEURS DU CLSC DES HAUTES-LAURENTIDES
- SYNDICAT DES EMPLOYÉES ET EMPLOYÉS DE SOUTIEN DE L'UNIVERSITÉ DE SHERBROOKE
- SYNDICAT DES EMPLOYÉES ET EMPLOYÉS DE SOUTIEN DU CEGEP DE LA GASPÉSIE ET DES ÎLES
- SYNDICAT DES EMPLOYÉES ET EMPLOYÉS DE SOUTIEN DU CEGEP JOLIETTE-DE LANAUDIÈRE
- ALLIANCE PROFESSIONNELLE DES INFIRMIÈRES ET INFIRMIERS AUXILIAIRES DU QUÉBEC
- SYNDICAT DES PROFESSEURS ET PROFESSEURES DE L'UNIVERSITÉ DU QUÉBEC À CHICOUTIMI
- SYNDICAT DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT DE LOUIS-HÉMON
- SYNDICAT DES P.N.E. DU CEGEP DE VICTORIAVILLE
- SYNDICAT DES ENSEIGNANTES ET ENSEIGNANTS DU CEGEP DE LIMOULOU
- SYNDICAT DES ENSEIGNANTES ET ENSEIGNANTS DU COLLEGE MONTMORENCY (LAVAL)
- SYNDICAT DES PROFESSEURS ET PROFESSEURES DU CEGEP DE SAINT-HYACINTHE

CINTE

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS OUTSIDE QUÉBEC:

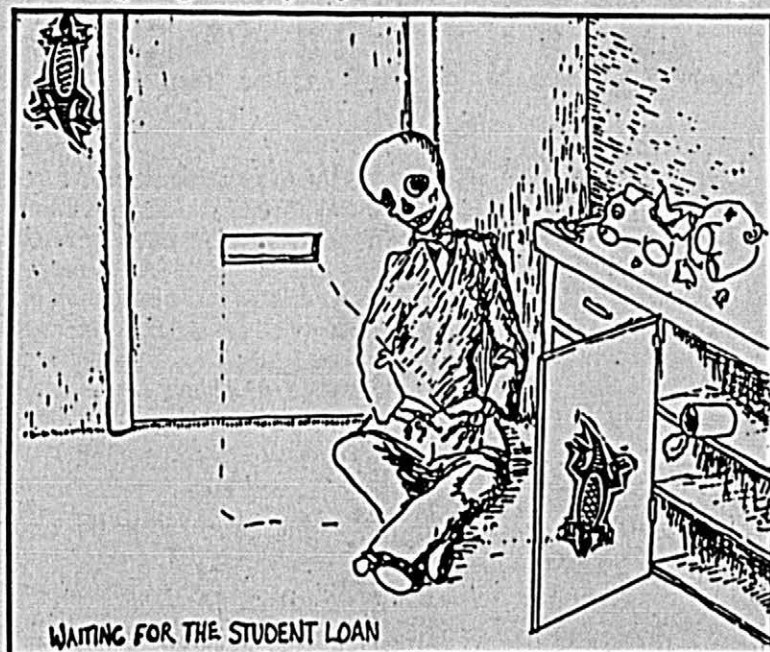
- ASSOCIATION ÉTUDIANTE 2E-3E CYCLES, DE L'UNIVERSITÉ DE CALGARY
- UNION DES ÉTUDIANTES ET ÉTUDIANTS DE L'UNIVERSITÉ DE LETHBRIDGE
- UNION DES ÉTUDIANTES ET ÉTUDIANTS DE LA NOUVELLE ÉCOSSE
- FÉDÉRATION CANADIENNE DES ÉTUDIANTES ET ÉTUDIANTS
- FCE — NOUVEAU BRUNSWICK
- FCE — RÉGION PACIFIQUE
- FÉDÉRATION DES ÉTUDIANTES ET ÉTUDIANTS DE L'ONTARIO

POPULAR ORGANIZATIONS:

- SOLIDARITÉ POPULAIRE QUÉBEC
- ACTION-TRAVAIL DES FEMMES
- MOUVEMENT ACTION-CHÔMAGE DE MONTRÉAL
- ASSOCIATIONS DE TRAVAILLEUSES ET TRAVAILLEURS HAÏTIENS-NES AU CANADA (ATAK)
- FÉDÉRATION DES ASSOCIATIONS DES FAMILLES MONOPARENTALES DU QUÉBEC
- CARREFOUR DES FEMMES D'ANJOU
- RÉSEAU D'AIDE AUX PERSONNES SEULES ET ITINÉRANTES
- PROGRAMME D'ACTION COMMUNAUTAIRE — PACTE BOIS-FRANCS
- REGROUPEMENT POUR LA PROMOTION DES PERSONNES HANDICAPÉES
- COMPTOIR ST-PIERRE INC (FORT COULONGE, QUÉBEC)
- COMITÉ DES ORGANISMES SOCIAUX DE LAVAL
- ASSOCIATION QUÉBÉCOISE DE DÉFENSE DES DROITS DES RETRAITÉS-ES ET PRÉRETRAITÉS-ES
- FRONT COMMUN DES PERSONNES ASSISTÉES SOCIALES DU QUÉBEC
- REGROUPEMENT DES FEMMES SANS EMPLOI DU NORD DU QUÉBEC
- REGROUPEMENT DES COMITÉS-LOGEMENT ET ASSOCIATIONS DE LOCATAIRES
- FRONT D'ACTION POPULAIRE EN RÉAMÉNAGEMENT URBAIN (FRAPRU)
- FÉDÉRATION DES ACEF DU QUÉBEC
- ASSOCIATION DES GENS À POURBOIRE
- LE MOUVEMENT D'ÉDUCATION POPULAIRE ET D'ACTION COMMUNAUTAIRE DU QUÉBEC (MEPACQ)
- TABLE RÉGIONALE DES ORGANISMES VOLONTAIRES D'ÉDUCATION POPULAIRE DE MONTRÉAL (TROVEP)
- TABLE RÉGIONALE DES ORGANISMES VOLONTAIRES D'ÉDUCATION POPULAIRE DE L'OUTAOUAIS
- TABLE RÉGIONALE DES ORGANISMES VOLONTAIRES D'ÉDUCATION POPULAIRE DE L'ESTRIE
- CENTRE DE CRISE SOLIDAV INC.
- REGROUPEMENT DES GROUPES POPULAIRES EN ALPHABÉTISATION DE QUÉBEC

POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS:

- MOUVEMENT SOCIALISTE
- FÉDÉRATION QUÉBÉCOISE DES JEUNES NÉO-DÉMOCRATES
- PARTI COMMUNISTE DU QUÉBEC
- ASSOCIATION DES GROUPES D'ÉDUCATION POPULAIRE AUTONOME — RÉGION 04 SUD



WAITING FOR THE STUDENT LOAN

The following is testimony given by the CSN to the Parliamentary Commission on Student Aid, February 1990.

"Student financial aid is part of a global politic of promoting and democratizing education in a society. The financial aid programmes that Canada and Québec initiate in the years to come will determine our economic, social and cultural future. In a rapidly-changing society where expertise and technological revolution play a central role, accessibility for the largest number of people to a quality education will be the base of progress in development and democracy.

"It is evident that the democratization of access to post-secondary studies, in particular for disenfranchised classes, depends on a set of social and economic factors that come into play throughout people's lifetimes... Even the best financial aid system will always be insufficient to achieve full accessibility for all."

Task force assists Teenage mothers

by Wayne Hiltz

A recently-completed task force offers new hope to young mothers in Montréal. With networking and resources to ease their struggle for self-sufficiency, young mothers may finally be getting the support they urgently need.

Being a mother at any age has never been an easy task. But it is especially difficult for teenage mothers — most of whom face poverty, isolation, a lack of social support, and a painful stigma.

They also face a lack of social services geared towards young mothers, little coordination between social agencies, and glaring insensitivity and moral judgements by some agencies.

In Montréal, this has been a special problem in the English-speaking community. The francophone community has more established institutions for young, single mothers such as the Centre Rosalie Jette.

A Task Force on Young Mothers (TAYM) was set up two years on the initiative of the YWCA's Teenage Mothers' Service (TAMS), with a grant from Health and Welfare Canada. TAYM completed a report with several recommendations just last week.

The Report states that the work of the Task Force was crucial in establishing a dialogue between

young mothers and workers. Without this dialogue, young mothers face almost impossible odds against finding employment and getting off welfare.

"If they're linked with resources and with peers, they have an opportunity to change their situation and to have hopes and plans for the future," said Marie Serdynska, the TAMS coordinator.

A Task Force survey of 36 young mothers showed an overwhelming 94 per cent definitely wanting to further their education, which had been interrupted by their pregnancies.

The Task Force made ten recommendations for major changes necessary for government and organizations to ease the plight of young mothers in Montréal. The following are the major recommendations:

- the federal government is urged to provide start-up funds for a national support network of young mothers, granting them a say in the laws, programs and policies which directly affect them.

- the provincial government is urged to provide the necessary funds to create a 24-hour hot-line to deal with isolation.

- the federal government is urged to fund a handbook which would be available at every social agency and provided free of charge to all

young mothers.

- the welfare system as it pertains to mothers should be changed so that it reflect the true nature of a mother's needs and responsibilities.

- young mothers should be given a voice in all agencies and groups which serve them and be given the means, such as money for transportation and baby-sitting, to participate; and

- organizations ought to come together and form an umbrella group which would act as a forum for exchange of information and ideas and foster movement of young mothers between groups which meet different needs.

The Task Force "was formed because of a real need for better communication between agencies and between mothers and agencies," the report stated.

Working in isolation, social and volunteer workers often did not know if what they were facing was a new trend or something isolated. Living in isolation, young mothers did not know if their feelings and problems were unique or shared by other young mothers.

Serdynska said she is cautiously optimistic that both levels of government will provide the necessary funding in this era of cutbacks because of its stated priority for children and youth.



Campus speak

The Education la Confédération nationale (CSN) comprehensive study month. Included alarming statistics of students in EGEPS's coming background. It's a little into the McGill to ask students for their opinions.

I don't know what a working-class person wants. Do they want to go to university? It just seems there's a bigger issue if it meant that much. But I'm from an upper-middle-class background, so my opinions may be shortsighted.

Glen Penn
First-year Arts

McGill is an upper-middle-class university. It's an elite for the English. I'm not surprised for example that there are very few Black students, or professors, and very few women professors. McGill is basically a WASP university.

Jama Mohamed
MA U2 History

Given that information, I don't see why McGill should go on. Think of all the food we could grow on this land. Think of all the people who could live in these buildings. Think of all the better uses for our brains, time and money. I'm ashamed to be here.

Chantal Goulet
U1 Physics

I think it's completely unrealistic. Just look at how many people apply for loans and bursaries. Whoever came up with this statistic should verify the sources.

Kelly Raymond
U1 English

Who cares what people's backgrounds are? The government provides help for those people. Obviously if they aren't here they didn't work hard enough in school. And that's probably why they're where they are, lying around on welfare.

Jonathon Brennan
U3 Anthropology

I perpetuate the myth why there is student apathy with regard to the recently-raised tuition hikes.

When people's parents pay their whole tuition, why should they care if it's \$1 000 or \$2 000?

Addin Katz
U3 Psychology

My first reaction would be disbelief. If this is actually representative then I question my own knowledge of how legitimate or private the university is. Can I see the report?

Deena Clayton
U1 Arts

It seems ludicrous that we're funding an institution that caters to students of middle-class backgrounds almost exclusively. It's almost a caste system. Education is supposed to be a public right. If it's only open to one sector, it's a farce.

Lisa Collins
U2 Anatomy

Class really is an untenable analytical concept. Funding provides an imperfect mechanism but it cannot be selectively condemned unless one condemns the entire structure of the nation.

Stephen Johnson
U3 Arts

To be articulate...
...or just plain fuzzy!
this is one of many questions

Underwhelmed by stars without wits

Sure, there are cutbacks and censorship clashes from time to time. But it's pretty hard to fault the Canadian government for neglecting its beloved cultural emissaries — unless you happen to be a low-income person not trained to want a front-row ticket at Place des Arts even if you could afford it.

Government cultural subsidies for you may amount to mass-audience services like the CBC — reflecting their understanding of your life in programming sophistication which can only be described as 'underwhelming'.

The only recourse is to take art into your own hands — and that can be hazardous. You might create something someone won't like.

by carl wilson

In *Roger and Me*, the popular U.S. documentary shut out of the Academy Awards this week, director Michael Moore details his firing from slick 'left' magazine *Mother Jones* over his "tendency to put pictures of auto workers and organizers from Michigan on the cover instead of celebrities like Susan Sarandon."

Moore, clearly, didn't understand what politics and culture are all about — organic fibres, sensitive song lyrics and saving the Cuban whales. He was under the illusion it had something to do with work, autonomy and self-expression. His publisher made it clear that if he wanted to do that kind of thing, he could do it himself — which is what he did, with enough luck and talent to 'succeed' in his own way.

But in most fashionable cultural circles, middle-class artists swell with pride at their ability merely to use the words 'inequity' or 'poverty' and figure that's quite enough.

Working-class artists' own efforts are overshadowed by television, radio, Hollywood movies and mass magazines — which never present an accurate reflection of poor people's lives, and sentimentalize art for what they assume to be an 'unsophisticated' audience.

Montréal playwright David Fennario, who grew up on the city's margin in Pointe Saint-Charles, says class bias is always obvious in mass-media products, especially when they depict supposedly 'working-class' situations.

"It's usually comic relief," he says, "and they leave out 85 per cent of what composes most working people's lives: the exploitation, the oppression, the lack of time, the lack of education, the competition — and just the ugliness of being poor, with no opportunity, no hope and no future, and knowing all that."

"There's very few people stupid enough not to realize when their lives are fuckin' shit, despite what a lot of middle-class people might think — the old myth of 'poor but happy,'" he adds.

Philip Amsel of the Notre-Dame-de-Grace People's Writing Group (affiliated with the

classes, don't get much of a say."

Fennario says this monopoly on power is used to maintain ruling-class ideology, which includes a fervent denial that we live in a class society at all. When I spoke to CBC "Journal" producer Mark Starowicz, he began by emphatically making sure I wasn't equating 'poor' and 'working-class' in my questions.

Starowicz's insistence on talking about ethnic communities, Canadian nationalism and deprived regions instead of working people was right in line with Fennario's assertion that the ruling class is willing to occasionally acknowledge sexism, racism and so on but "denies the whole premise of class. We're not talking about minority suffering here," Fennario says. "We're talking about most of the population."

Starowicz, however, thought it was more important to say, "I have a six year old girl, and it's very hard raising a Canadian girl in this electronic society — rich, poor, whatever — because there's nothing Canadian to rent in the video store, nothing on TV."

As for class bias in Canadian television, he said "I'm not interested in attacking what we already have. It's just pitifully tiny."

He acknowledged the negative impact on struggling people of having U.S.-dominated airwaves, as well as the inadequacy of much Canadian television in addressing "people's own realities."

He pointed to "our humble old *Beachcombers*" and *Degrassi Junior High* as exceptions, saying the latter does a "fabulous" job of dealing with what he called "the culture of the streetcar." He just thought there had to be more, and that this was primarily a nationalist issue.

"Carving up that tiny slice [amongst classes] is a pointless exercise," he said.

Fennario has an answer to that blinkered set of priorities, too. "It's the self-censorship that comes with being a director or a producer and learning to make what's required.

It's just hinted at, it's not open censorship — but you do it to yourself or you won't work. You usually don't even admit you're doing it to yourself," he says.

But there are other options — they are few and difficult to discover, but they're there. Amsel's writing group, which began last fall and had a successful first public reading last Thursday in a local Maison de la Culture, is an example. They'll be publishing some pieces in the city-wide *Poor People's Press* next month, a journal being put out by several of the city's Anti-Poverty groups.

"When the aim of life is to get

ity," and takes a back seat to encouraging class struggle.

"The only time the working class ever expresses itself creatively is when they're on strike or protesting, saying 'fuck this shit' and getting something moving. Otherwise they're just watching that garbage on TV, trying to make believe maybe it's right," he says.

But Nawrocki, fresh from a Rhythm Activism 'A home for a song' housing issues cabaret which toured Montréal community centres, disagrees. He points to Black Rock as an example to be followed.

"Mass media depictions of the working class are usually comic relief, and they leave out 85 per cent of what composes most working people's lives: the exploitation, the oppression, the lack of time, the lack of education, the competition — and just the ugliness of being poor, with no opportunity, no hope and no future, and knowing all that."

rich, the values of acquisitiveness and competition are mirrored in the media," Amsel says. "We're trying to bring the 'poor' values of sharing and working together back in our writing."

He says literature is a universally-loved element of all class cultures, citing working people's attachments to their "national" poets like Robbie Burns. The Writing Group tries to encourage any and all comers to try their hand at self-expression, and this acceptance is "quite an event, for somebody who is normally very far from literature."

"We believe poor people have meaningful lives. It's often said the antithesis of mass culture will be found in the working class — and what we're doing is part of that," Amsel says.

Fennario says he tries to encourage his community to write, too, most notably in his work with Verdun's Black Rock Theatre group, but "it's not my main prior-

"They went back to basics — cabaret nights, talent nights with local musicians — and that's where a lot of the *real* music is happening, in garage bands and pubs where they still allow people to jam with acoustic instruments. These people don't have rock star aspirations, they're just enjoying making music," Nawrocki says.

Unfortunately, he adds, such work usually gets labelled 'amateur' by *haute couture* 'artists,' and are brushed aside. Amsel too thinks the greatest risk for poor artists is basically being ignored.

But Nawrocki bases his optimism on the ecstatic reaction Rhythm Activism got in its performances for low-income tenants and people on welfare this winter. "I would strongly recommend people who are tired of their cultural ghettos break out and look around. There are so many community groups out there that don't have any access to cultural resources, and there's a huge audience that would be open to new music, new art and theatre, but it would help if that work was linked to their everyday lives."

"You can't just go in there with a punk band and expect people to go, 'Oh, wonderful!'" he warns. "There has to be a certain respect for where people are coming from. But in the end, what struck me was that there has to be a way to encourage these people we were performing for to go out and do this stuff for themselves, for their friends and for their neighbours."

Even Fennario would affirm that art can be a valuable class war weapon — he suggests that revolution might finally be the highest form of working-class art.

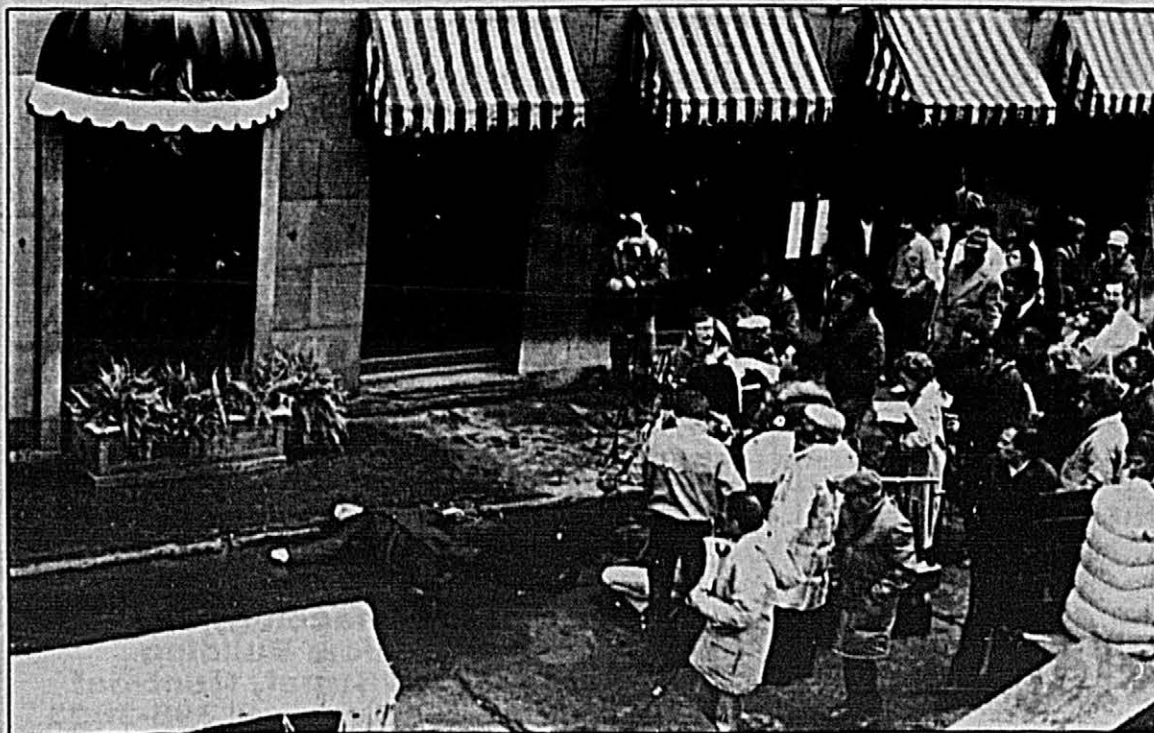
"It's either used against us or used against them," he says. "There's no middle ground in a class society." Starowicz and his ilk may not be able to postpone the question forever.

NDG Anti-Poverty Group) agrees. "The media makes it seem like humanity is a privilege of the rich," he says. "So the poor person feels like s/he lacks human qualities."

And community activist Norman Nawrocki of the cabaret-punk band Rhythm Activism thinks mass culture "lulls people into thinking there's some kind of social consensus out there about the way things are. It essentially serves to help people numb out the grim reality around them."

According to Nawrocki, "It's taken away the art of singing and dancing, the art of storytelling, the art of amusing ourselves in families or communities and tried to sell it back as 'professional.' That has led people to believe they themselves aren't capable of singing, dancing, acting or telling stories, so people think they have to go out and buy records and videos to have a cultural experience."

Fennario thinks this is largely because "working-class people don't have any decision-making power over content in our culture. The decisions are all made by directors, producers and publishers, and the working-class people are sweeping the floors, handling the cameras, and shifting scenery. Even the actors and some of the writers, whom I'd include in the working



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ALTERNATIVE PRESS REVIEW

Selected viewpoints and articles reprinted from the marginal media

CANADA'S WORSENING POVERTY

Québec students are currently fighting an economic program which will bar many from post-secondary study. Certain sectors of the population will suffer the most extreme consequences of rising tuition fees and changes to the loans and bursaries system — native peoples, women, refugees, immigrants, the unemployed, welfare recipients, the working poor and their children. But education cutbacks are not an isolated event. The re-organization of the economy including cutbacks to social welfare programs under the Mulroney and Bourassa governments hit the most marginalized sectors of Canadian and Québécois society. As with students, groups representing those under attack have begun to resist.

What follows is a series of extracts from various analytical and news magazines looking at the economic problems we face if no cohesive and concerted resistance is mounted.

GST creates higher rate of taxation for poor

In the February 1990 issue of *Kinesis*, a Vancouver-based feminist newspaper, Chris Meyer interviews feminist and economist Marjorie Cohen about the proposed Goods and Services Tax (GST) and the impact it will have on lower income people.

Chris: Why is the proposed GST a negative tax for women?

Marjorie: [The GST] is a major shift in the principles of taxation. Although we've never had a truly progressive tax system in Canada, we do have this notion that people who are wealthier have a better ability to pay tax on income. So we've tended to say that people with larger incomes should have a larger proportion of their income go to tax, just based on ability to pay.

The GST is a shift away from that principle toward more of a flat

tax — now everybody is paying the same percentage. For people in the lower income bracket, which of course includes women, this means we will be paying a larger proportion of our income on tax than will wealthy people.

Let me give you an example. It's estimated that families with income of less than \$20 000 a year will be spending about 74 percent of their income now on taxable items. Whereas a family with an income around \$100 000 a year will be paying about 47 percent of their income on taxable items.

At any one particular time in Canada, the majority of adult women have no income. What [the government] is doing now is imposing a tax on people who have no ability to pay. Other women who work — if we take part-time and full-time together — their average

income is something like \$15 000 a year. These people will be spending a large proportion of their income on items that will be taxed.

This is the major problem with the GST and why we should be fighting it: ideologically, the whole shift in principles of taxation.

We're going to really notice the effect on raising children. Normally, when governments institute a tax like this, they exempt things like books and children's items, but the GST doesn't. It's going to be more expensive to raise children because there will be a tax on anything we buy for kids. Kid's clothes will be far more expensive. It will also affect daycare rates.

Kinesis

Vancouver Status of Women
302-1720 Grant Street
Vancouver, BC V5L 2Y6

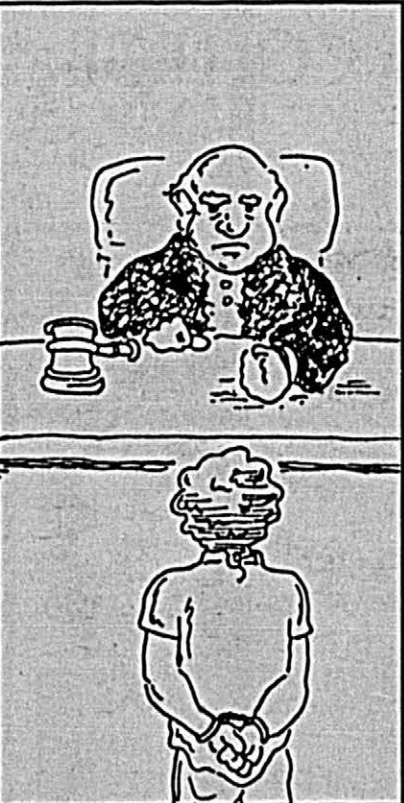
Les étudiant-e-s autochtones et l'accessibilité à l'éducation

Felix Atencio Gonzales looks at the impact of budget cuts for native education in the Volume 1, Number 8 issue of *Sans Réserve*, a Montréal-based Native newspaper.

Les coupures du budget de 130 millions destiné au programme d'assistance post-secondaire pour les étudiant-e-s autochtones a réveillé une vive contestation à travers le pays. Les nouvelles mesures décidées par le ministère des Affaires Indiennes et du Nord canadien ont été «conçues sans consultation appropriée» affirme un document de l'Assemblée des Premières Nations. En effet, à partir du 1er avril 1989, le programme prévoit des changements notamment du montant de l'assistance et du temps d'éligibilité, pour les 15 000 étudiant-e-s assisté-e-s par le programme.

Des étudiant-e-s, professeurs, conseillers autochtones ont foulé les rues le 22 mars dernier pour manifester leur désapprobation au sujet du nouveau programme qui prévoit plus de coupures des allocations que d'augmentations.

Une étude comparative (entre le programme actuel - le E-12 - et le nouveau programme) préparée par



les étudiant-e-s autochtones de l'Université de Dalhousie en Nouvelle Écosse conclut que des dix catégories d'étudiant-e-s visées par le nouveau programme, trois re-

cevront des augmentations totalisant 1288 dollars. Par contre, les allocations des sept catégories restantes seront réduites de 5856 dollars.

Les autochtones craignent que ces coupures au budget du programme d'assistance, dont les prestataires ont augmenté de 3500 étudiant-e-s en 1978 à 15 000 en 1988-89, limitent l'accessibilité à l'éducation. «Quand les autochtones réalisent que l'éducation peut mener à la sortie de leur pauvreté et une opportunité pour mener une vie autonome et indépendante, pourquoi le gouvernement supprime cette initiative au lieu de faire son possible pour la promouvoir?» questionne un document distribué aux étudiant-e-s réuni-e-s pour discuter du nouveau programme. La réunion organisée par le Centre d'amitié Autochtone de Montréal, démontre le sérieux intérêt et la préoccupation générale des autochtones face à ce programme d'accessibilité à l'éducation.

Sans Réserve

Communications autochtones
3575 boul. St-Laurent, suite 513
Montréal, Québec H2X 2T7

Free Trade lies exposed too late

In the March 1990 issue of *Canadian Dimension*, Bruce Campbell assesses the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) in the fourteen months since it became part of Canadian economic policy.

The result of the restructuring has been devastating for thousands of Canadian working men and women and their families. The Canadian Labour Congress preliminary figures for free trade driven job losses since the FTA was implemented stand at 72 000. Our data collection is not comprehensive and our reporting covers manufacturing and basic services where about one-quarter of Canadians are employed. We believe a similar process is underway in the rest of the economy. There is also a secondary and tertiary job loss which can be as much as double or triple the original loss. Both these effects are beyond our capacity to monitor. Consequently, we believe actual free trade job losses are much higher than our figures indicate.

The Economic Council of Canada, which was Mr. Mulroney's main authoritative source on FTA benefits, projected that the FTA would create an extra 250 000 FTA jobs over 10 years. In the manufacturing sector, the Council projected 95 000 jobs created, 6000 jobs lost, for a net gain of 89 000 jobs....

During last election's televised leaders debate, Brian Mulroney, in his famous exchange with John Turner, said: "And that is why I did it, to promote prosperity."

After the first year of the FTA it is becoming clear that Mr. Mulroney is bringing prosperity for a privileged minority but not for most Canadians.



There is an orgy of restructuring underway. Canadians are expected to bear the burden of this corporate binge. Behind the job loss numbers are countless stories of human pain: families uprooted, fragmented, relocated, communities damaged or destroyed, impoverishment, loss of personal dignity, stress-related disease, family violence.

Thousands of middle income manufacturing and basic service jobs are being lost. Where workers find other jobs they are generally at lower wage and skill levels. Those who keep their jobs are increasingly forced to take wage freezes or cuts.

Management consultant firms say that the FTA is benefiting high income corporate executives and professionals as their salaries harmonize upward to United States levels. Canadian income patterns are becoming more like those in the United States, the most unequal in the industrial world.

The free trade agreement is speeding up an alarming process of worsening inequality already underway. Middle income groups are

continued on page 12



'Priority needs of people' demand community input

In the Fall 1988 issue of *FUSE Magazine*, Mark Hesselink examines the "obscene" disparity between Toronto's cultural megaprojects and human needs.

While a great deal of bureaucratic energy is being generated to construct the illusion of a "lifestyle" art community, this does not mean that the notion of community as the site(s) of political intervention, cannot serve as the basis of resistance for oppositional politics. One such example, The Bread Not Circuses Coalition, a group of anti-poverty activists, municipal politicians, cultural workers, activist women's groups, tenant organizations and concerned people shows that it is possible to form effective coalitions in the face of total corporate greed.

Struggling for the first priority needs of people — quality affordable housing, sufficient food, good childcare, jobs and a healthy city — the coalition is calling for community inclusion in government planning processes. Specifically they want a full public accounting of financial and social costs, adequate funding for concerned groups — like The

continued on page 12

Gimme bread

continued from page 11

Bread Not Circuses Coalition — to cover organizational expenses such as the cost of hiring experts and

public education, rock-solid guarantees (build the housing first as a sign of good faith) and finally the power to say no....

Once held to be the basis of resistance and opposition to a

dominant culture, the notion of community has now become contested territory. Artists' communities may need to start defining themselves organizationally as artists' communities. As artists, we need to

re-define the terms that frame the sites of the many different struggles we are engaged in. This socially and politically based integration of culture by artists suggests the possibility that art can be an emancipa-

tory practice. In these terms, an art community is indispensable to the broader spectrum of community-based actions.

Fuse Magazine

1st Floor
183 Bathurst Street
Toronto, On
M5T 9Z9

and free me

continued from page 11

seeing their earnings fall. The fastest growth of new jobs are at the highest and lowest income levels. Young people are hardest hit by falling incomes and even the Economic Council admits we are creating a lost generation of impoverished youth.

The free trade-led corporate agenda is creating two Canadas, one for the rich and one for the rest of us. North American economic integration is simultaneously causing nothing less than the disintegration of Canadian society.

Canadian Dimension
801 - 44 Princess Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3B 2Z9

Kinesis, Sans Réserve and Canadian Dimension are available at Librairie Alternative, 2035 St-Laurent, Montréal, tel: 844-3207. Also check out the dossier of housing issues recently prepared by the "Front d'action populaire en réaménagement urbain (FRAPRU): On rest ici! la lutte pour sauver nos logements et nos quartiers.

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Squat for your housing rights

by Joe Altwasser

Canadian University Press

Far from T.V. cameras and picketing pensioners there is another housing trend occupying Canadian cities. It is a silent response to sweeping urban growth and a shortage of affordable housing — in older residential and industrial tracts, pockets of vacant buildings slated for demolition are being occupied by squatters.

Contemporary urban squatting, the organised occupation of unoccupied buildings, grew up in post-war England as a response to the housing shortage caused by bombings and government inefficiency in reconstructing the buildings. Today London has over 30 000 squatters, many of whom are students. There have been widespread squatting movements in West Berlin, Amsterdam, Philadelphia and New York.

Megan Osborne (a pseudonym) lives at an East Vancouver address which is slated for demolition. A 25-year old graduate of philosophy, Megan is one of a growing number of people who have chosen to fight Vancouver's high housing prices by squatting in abandoned houses being demolished to make room for condominiums and expensive apartments.

Megan's and many others' squats, are taking place near Commercial Drive in the city's east side, where many of the older family-style residences are being replaced by upscale dwellings.

The process, known as gentrification, is a 1980s phenomena in which older neighborhoods with character are redeveloped into more expensive accommodations. Often this process is at the expense of the lower-income groups who traditionally occupied the area.

While it is difficult to determine an accurate number, there are likely more than a hundred squatters currently in Vancouver. Toronto experienced organized squats when its housing market boomed and created a lack of affordable housing during the 1980s. In Montréal squatting is mainly a temporary measure for homeless people according to Pierre Gaudreau of Front d'action populaire du réaménagement urbain (FRAPRU).

"Few people are working on this issue in Montréal," said Gaudreau. "Action is mainly oriented to charity work."

"We think empty houses should be squatted. It's a normal reaction to the housing crisis," he said.

A political challenge

The decision to squat was not easy for

Megan because it challenges one of our society's most cherished institutions — private property.

"I used to think that owners could do anything they want," she said. "I still kind of accept that whole system where people own something. But now I am in a situation where I don't want a traditional job."

Megan now holds two part-time jobs, playing for a local band and working for a graphics company.

"The area is being bought out by developers. Tenants are beginning to fight back now — there will be more," she said.

Megan predicts that many in the arts community will be forced to leave the city for areas where the cost of living is lower.

Stephen Leary of the Downtown Eastside Residents Association (DERA) of Vancouver said at present there is little squatting taking place in the downtown east-side, but acknowledges that there is certainly a possibility of it in the future as it is preferable to living on the street.

According to the United Nations defini-



tion of homelessness there are currently over 10 000 people in Vancouver who fit the category, said Leary.

"We don't think there is a large number of these people who are shelterless, but there is a large number who are very close. All it takes is a couple of big hotels to be torn down. There are quite a few now slated," warned Leary.

"We are on the down-hill side of the hill. When it free-falls, who knows?"

The vacancy rate in Vancouver is 0.4

per cent which leaves approximately 432 suites for rent in Vancouver, according to city housing planner John Winsor.

Leary said that the recent city proposal to build 52 units of housing is "laughable" and that the city proposal is a "drop in the bucket considering we have 2600 people on our waiting list. The city estimates that there are over 17 000 people city-wide on waiting lists for affordable housing. And they won't be overestimating the figure."

Over 1700 housing units have been lost in the downtown eastside alone since 1986, stated Leary.

He estimated that suburbs Kerrisdale and Kitsilano have each lost approximately 1000 housing units—most of them in the last 18 months.

"There is no way we are going to replace what is being lost."

In the past, squatting in Vancouver has not been a safe practice and Leary cautions potential squatters to the ever-present dangers.

"It's not a glamorous life, many are glue-sniffers and rip-off artists," he said. "Most of the squatters here in the past have not been politically motivated."

In Europe the movement is highly developed with a whole culture and philosophy — and tens of thousands of people — behind it. Besides providing housing and often including free services like heating and electricity, squatting is a means for radical movements to create free space in which to organize and develop their own institutions. Squatting is a challenge to the system as a whole and a rallying point for self-management, communal living and militant resistance.

Leary has not ruled out the possibility of organized squats for the future as Vancouver's housing market continues to deteriorate.

"We have spoken of the possibility of going in and taking over a place," he said, though he believes that DERA has a way to go before it can stage a political squat because of the high level of commitment and



organization it takes.

"They are starting to organize squatting in Toronto," he said.

In Toronto, the housing crisis is more critical than in Vancouver and it has left social planners scrambling for alternatives to provide housing for an increasingly large segment of society.

Squatting as alternative action

Recently, squatting has started to become a viable alternative.

Leslie Robinson of Metro Tenants Legal Services in Toronto said, "Lobbying governments and trying to get laws to both protect tenants and provide housing is frustrating."

"We are looking for alternative actions. We want something we can take for ourselves, rather than having to ask for it."

"Because of the laws, power of police, and the huge financial interests that landowners have, it is very difficult for people to provide or develop housing in the city for themselves," said Robinson.

In Canada there are no laws that allow people to squat, even if they are in need and there is a vacant building available. Squatters can be arrested for breaking and entry.

In fact, police in Canada can arrest squatters for merely being on property that they had not been given permission to enter — even without the instigation of owners.

Robinson said that in Toronto owners are now bricking up the windows and doors on the first floors of buildings in order to discourage squatters.

Most Torontonians did not even realise they had squatters until the city hosted the 1988 economic summit, said Robinson. But in 1982, there were some 300 squatters in the downtown area east of Yonge Street alone.

In Vancouver the situation has not reached the point where concrete plans are being blue-printed, but some organisations like the Tenants Rights Coalition (TRC) are keeping a watchful eye and may be forced into direct action soon if nothing is done to ease the local housing crisis.

"Right now we realise that people in Vancouver are being forced to squat, Vancouver is becoming another large city that is forcing people to do it," said Noreen Shanahan of the TRC.

"Tenants are being forced out and buildings are being left empty," she said.

And the magnitude of the development is incredible. "Between January and July last year, 1009 units were demolished throughout the city," she said.

In response to the lack of government intervention the TRC has been planning to become much more active in helping people facing a housing crisis.

Shanahan is documenting the numbers of vacant buildings throughout the city and hopes to take a rough census of the number of people living in them.

Squatting is new to the TRC but Shanahan says they will help and use their exposure to the media and the government to show the public what level the housing crisis has reached.

Shanahan believes another of the culprits of the housing crisis is gentrification.

"Gentrification is being seen all over the city. Before if you could not afford to live in Kits or Kerrisdale, you moved to the east end.

We are now talking about the east end (becoming unaffordable)," she said.

"Vancouver is turning into a city for the rich. People on low and fixed income housing cannot find places to live. People are being forced out of the city," she said.

"Poverty is growing. And the stock of affordable housing is disappearing," said Gaudreau of FRAPRU. "I think squatting will grow in Montréal."

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Sublet 1 1/2. May - July. Walking distance. Pools, sauna, gym. Furniture available. Call David or leave message 397-3311 (Day), 848-0154 (Evening).

Large 5 1/2, St. Dominique/Beaubien, near metros deCaslelneau and Beaubien, bus 55. Great landlord, fantastic shopping, renovated. Available May 1, option to renew, fridge/stove optional \$450 negotiable. 272-0920 evenings.

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For More Info please call:
Harvey Finkelberg, Director 737-8551
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YM-YWHA



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MON: NFL Football (\$50 for closest score, combined points)
TUES: Chicken Wings (15¢ each)
WED: Ladies Night (2 for 1)
THUR: Black Night (Black Label 2 for 1)
FRI: Fabulous Shooter Night (\$1 Shooter 11pm - 1am)
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The Afrocentric Idea - Molefi Kete Asante
Gender Class and Rural Transition - Maureen Mackintosh
1205 De Maisonneuve W. (between Drummond & Stanley) 287-9739
Bridgehead Tea and Coffee Available

CLASSIFIEDS

building. From May 1st, option to renew. Call 939-5787 before 11pm, leave message.

Sunny 4 1/2. Hardwood floors, high ceilings, balcony, well kept building. Ideal for couples. \$585/mo. Heat and water included 845-7512.

Sublet from May 10 to June 30. Option to renew. Sunny 1 1/2, 5 minutes from Place des Arts Metro and McGill Campus. Rent negotiable. Ph: 284-5561.

Fabulous 4 1/2 sublet May 1st! Hardwood floors, laundry, shopping, huge rooms. Atwater metro, 24 & 144 bus routes - \$600.00 negotiable. Call 939-9655 now!

Sublet with option. Large, clean 4 1/2. Hutchison near everything. Heat, water, security & laundry facilities. Not to be missed! All or Michèle 286-0558.

3 1/2 to sublet. Quiet, near Guy metro and Victoria building, Concordia University (1 minute walk). Furnished, heated. Attractive, available April 1st. Please call Keiko at 932-0324.

Westmount Sublet. Option to Renew. Large 6 1/2. Right on Sherbrooke, opposite Green Ave metro Atwater. Lots of sunlight, hardwood floors. \$594/month. Call 933-9318.

I'm Desperate - must sublet large, clean 1 1/2 for April 15th. Furnished, heat included, with rooftop balcony. On Durocher. (1 min. from campus). Rent negotiable. Call Craig 848-1109.

343 MOVERS

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Turan Transport (ex-Student Movers) Moving: Toronto, Calgary, Vancouver. Storage; weekly, monthly student rates. Local big or small moves. BBB. VISA, 747-2222 or 739-8242.

350 - JOBS

Bartenders - Get yourself a very lucrative part-time job. The Master School of Bartending offers training courses and placement service. 2021 Peel Street (Peel Metro). 849-2828. (Student Discounts).

Summer Jobs: Montreal firm requires experienced Prolog programmer. Please drop off resume at Daily Business Office with Caroline or Boris, Student Union room B-17 or call 284-2840.

Camp Gasher (Jewish Summer Camp) has staff positions available for the coming summer (June 25-August 21) Counsellors, swimming/water-ski instructors. For more information, call Michael 939-9617.

Summer Job Opportunity. Motivated Student Sellers Needed. Work your own hours (app. 15hrs/week) Earn over \$1000.00 a month. Call 486-3747.

352 - HELP WANTED

Swim Director, Swim Instructors, & assistant swim director for children's camp north of Montreal. End June-mid August. Call 481-1875.

Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research is

looking for a responsible person as a Glassware/Media Technician on a permanent/part-time basis 5 days a week with flexible hours. Salary: \$9.00-\$11.00/hour according to experience. The duties consist of autoclave sterilization, glassware, pipettes and various other duties. For interview call 842-1603 and ask for Francine Woolcott.

Ludwig Institute for Cancer Research is looking for an Office Clerk on a temporary basis (from May 14 - June 15) 5 days a week from Monday to Friday 9:00 - 17:00. Salary: \$8.00-\$10.00/hour according to experience. The duties consist of receptionist, typing (with knowledge of Macintosh computer and the Microsoft Word program) and various other tasks. For interview call 842-1603 and ask for Francine Woolcott.

Small daycare looking for experienced early childhood educator to start immediately - from 3:30-5:30. Close to McGill. Call 286-1381.

Sun and Fun Camp Ouareau (girls camp in Laurentians of Quebec, founded 1922): Female counsellors and instructors for tennis, windsurfing, canoeing, swimming, arts & crafts. Also teachers for E.S.L. and F.S.L., bilingual secretary. Working knowledge of second language necessary. Send C.V. to Madeline Allen, 29 Summer St. Lennoxville, Que. J1M 1G4 or call 819-562-9641.

Opportunities in Japan. Teach English Conversation. Requirements: Bachelor's degree; English fluency; one year stay. Information available at Counselling Services (3637 Peel Rm. 301) Japan Placement Service.

Papertree Planters: Planters wanted. Info session Friday, April 6th, 2:00 - 6:00, 3483 Stanley St. or call Dave 933-7968, Bill 489-1432, Herb 935-5337.

354 - TYPING SERVICES

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358 SERVICES OFFERED

Willing females & males needed for student haircuts. Supervised by professionals. Tuesdays at 5 p.m. For cuts \$10. Estetica 2175 Crescent. For appointments 849-9231.

Essay Help Offered by English Ph. D. English, Social Sciences, Humanities. Tutoring/Editing/writing assistance. 933-8652.

361 ARTICLES FOR SALE

TAKUMAR ZOOM LENS \$100 Call Heidi 934-1517.

T-Shirts 100% cotton \$5.00 - \$5.00 - \$5.00! Made in Canada - fashion colors - fashion labels removed, tank tops, trench coats, EXXA military surplus 550 President Kennedy.

Imported from Thailand: knapsacks, shoulder bags and pouches. Beaded and embroidered. All different. Wholesale prices. \$16 - \$35. For sale by student on Hutchison. Call 982-6584.

J.V.C. blaster: Good condition - Hyper-Base sound detachable speakers \$75.00. Negotiable.

New SONY turntable - still in box - cartridge included: \$100 - negotiable. Call 935-2323.

Leather Jacket: brown, size medium, from Italy, brand new. For sale best offer 286-1454.

363 TO GIVE AWAY

Desperately seeking home for big loveable tomcat with great personality. Plea to any catlovers - he'd be a fun addition to your family! Call 287-7614.

372 LOST AND FOUND

ISABEL CHRISTINA STRAMWASSER; You have lost your I.D. card - Call MaryJane 286-0813.

Lost: Donegal Tweed Cap Size 7 1/2 on Friday March 23rd in Arts Building. Given to me by my recently deceased grandfather from Galway. Please return to Arts porter.

Lost: A Turquoise Necklace (strung with some other stones as well), on Friday, March 23. If you found it, please call 982-0639. Reward!

Lost Black Tuxedo Jacket at the Red and White Ball Friday March 23rd. Has initials JB on inside pocket. Reward offered - call 848-0208.

374 - PERSONALS

Frosty says...

"Fried tofu pepperoni - Yum."



WALK-SAFE NETWORK. McL. Lobby Mon - Thurs 10:45 p.m.

Can't remember the theme to Gilligan's Island? Need the library hours? Can't sleep? Call McGill Nightline, we're funky and we live for this stuff! 398-6246 - Anonymous Confidential. 6 p.m. to 3 a.m. nightly.

Hey you! It's time for 4-floors on Friday, March 30, featuring Chalk Circle and 514. Only \$3.98 with McGill LD. It's the last blow-out of the year so don't miss the party!

Take note!!! April 6 is McGill Christian fellowship's last worship service. We'd love to see all you christians come worship together. Details next week.

The McGill Tax Clinic has completed your forms! Please come and pick them up: Bronfman Lobby March 28-29, 10:30-3:00. Not responsible for forms after this date!

Can't afford Greece this Summer? Escape to exotic Lake St. Louise "Fireball" crew needed who love to sail and race for fun. Lesley 932-4268, 989-9478.

Vanda, Gamma Phi is proud to have a sister who will someday help shape the world! Good luck in architecture and all your future endeavors.

Wendy, Congrats on earning a second degree!

Good luck in the future. Don't get too sentimental because sisterhood is forever. We love you. roB.

Congratulations Vanda Sebben, Gail Rose, Christine Kovich, Wendy Wakshinski, Lisa Zarb. We love you! Your sister at Gamma Phi Beta.

385 NOTICES

Gays and Lesbians of McGill offers an information and counselling talkline. Call us with questions, problems, or just to talk. Phone 398-6822 or drop by Union 417, M-F, 7 - 10 p.m.

Lesbian/Gay studies group meets Thursdays, discussion group meets Fridays, both at Yellow Door (3625 Aylmer) 17h00. Info 597-0363 (Bill).

Help End Animal Suffering. META is having a General meeting Tuesday, April 3, 5:30 p.m. Room B-09, Student Union. All Welcome. Info: 276-0914.

"The Polka Dot Door Live" (from TVOntario) Westmount High Auditorium 4350 St. Catherine O. April 29/30 11:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. Tickets \$10.00 available at Silverberg (Cavendish Mall) Livres Babar (Pl. Claire) Book Center (5168 Queen Mary and Centennial Plaza) Oink-Oink (1361 Greene Ave) Renaud Bray Library (5225 Cote Des Neiges).

Stressed Out?? Get some tips on coping. Redpath Library, Main Entrance Room 07A. 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. Monday to Thursday, April 2nd to April 19th. Free decaff coffee and tea. A McGill Chaplaincy program. 398-4104.

The Winning number for K.R.T.'s 50/50 Draw is: 364. To arrange to collect your prize call 845-6726 and ask for John or James.

Are you Lithuanian? or simply interested in the fight for independence? To participate in Lithuanian independence demonstrations, call us. We need your support! Ilona 284-6326 or Lana 769-1608.

387 VOLUNTEERS

Bilinguals needed for research. must be proficient in English and French. Will be paid \$10/hour (needed for 3 hours). If interested call 398-6105.

Chance to win \$200! 1 hr-long painless (fun?) psychology study. Wendy 285-261.

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